

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED



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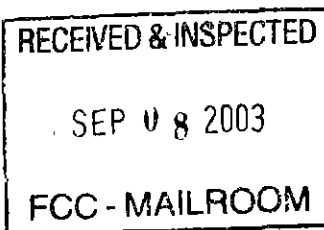
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Fax (318) 649-5226

August 19, 2003

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554



RE IN THE MATTER OF IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS IN THE
800 MHZ BAND; WT DOCKET NO. 02-55 (EX PARTE)

Dear Madam Secretary:

The Caldwell Parish Sheriff Office is writing to express its opposition to Nextel's so-called "Consensus Plan" and to urge the FCC to adopt the "Balanced Approach," which was filed on May 29, 2003. As discussed below in greater detail, we believe that the Consensus Plan will unnecessarily jeopardize Public Safety communication systems. Instead, the FCC should adopt a solution, such as the Balanced Approach, that does not require Public Safety licensees to relocate and does not reduce their interference protection.

The Caldwell Parish Sheriff Office has licensed an 800 MHz communications system, which is used by employees of the Sheriff's department. The communications system supports a number of the Sheriff's office activities including normal dispatching and communications and also emergency response systems.

We are concerned that the Consensus Plan's relocation process is extremely complicated and there is no guarantee that Public Safety licensees will be able to continually operate their communications systems during this process. Furthermore, it is unrealistic to expect all Public Safety licensees to relocate in 12 months or less given the complexity of some Public Safety systems.

Also, Public Safety licensees could be subject to more interference because the Consensus Plan protects Public Safety licensees only if they meet certain signal strength and receiver requirements. Because most Public Safety communication systems do not meet these

requirements, they will have to expend significant resources to ensure that they are protected from interference. Further, the interference situation could be worse if rebanding is not completed before Nextel's funding runs out.

Therefore, the Caldwell Parish Sheriff Office supports the Balanced Approach, which is superior to the Consensus Plan because it takes proactive steps to immediately deal with Public Safety interference by relying on technical solutions and increased enforcement. As a result, this proposal is less disruptive and less expensive than the Consensus Plan so Public Safety communications will not be jeopardized. For all the reasons stated above, the Caldwell Parish Sheriff's Office urges the FCC to adopt the Balanced Approach.

Cordially yours,

Steven E May, Sheriff
Caldwell Parish, Louisiana